# The Advice

A CAUTION AGAINST SOME NEWLY INVENTED METHODOLOGIES THAT HAVE ARISEN UNDER THE BANNER OF SALAFIYYAH!

Reviewed by: Shaykh Wasiyyullaah 'Abbaas, Teacher and Mufti at the Haram in Makkah

Initial review done by ahlul 'ilm at Bangalore, India

Compiled by: Abu Sahl Omer

### بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم الحمد لله رب العالمين و الصالة و السالم على رسول الله، و بعد

#### INTRODUCTION

It was from the great Mercy of Allaah and His *Fadhl* that we had two scholars of high standing and excellence visiting us recently, here in Bangalore, India. They were the esteemed Shaykh Saalih ibn Sa'd as Suhaymee from Madeenah and the noble Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ramzaan al Haajiree from Jubail, KSA; may Allaah preserve them both.

We benefitted immensely from their duroos (lessons) and advices during their short stay of 6 days, *alhamdulillaah*. This was the Imaam Abu Haneefah Dawrah (seminar) that was organized in the month of Safar 1434H in the city of Bangalore in India by Kulliyyatul Hadeeth and CIS (Center for Islamic Studies), under the patronage of Jamiat Ahle Hadith, India and Shaykh Wasiullaah Abbaas *hafidhahullaah* (Mufti at al-Masjid ul-Haram, Makkah).

One particular advice that was given by Shaykh Saalih as Suhaymee was to seek knowledge and to benefit from the people of knowledge who are present locally with us here in Bangalore, and in India. He said that some people have come up with newly invented ideas that "we should not sit with or benefit from the local people of knowledge here" and so on – he said that all of this is from falsehood. This advice is extremely clear and detailed, such that it leaves no room for doubt. The Shaykh had requested to spread the recording of this advice across India (in addition to another clarification that dealt with another topic)!!

The recording of this advice can be listened to here.

However even after a clarification and advice as clear as the sun, we find little or no signs of change or repentance from the people responsible for spreading this kind of misguided thinking. Rather they are seen inventing dubious arguments and are still trying to find ways around this advice. They have been advised several times before, by people of knowledge and other than them, but with little or no effect. However, this advice is probably one of the most profound and most clear advices, and that too coming from a senior scholar of our Ummah, known for his strength in the Sunnah and knowledge across the world, Shaykh Saalih as Suhaymee hafidhahullaah.

We fear for these people who refuse to change their ways despite the truth being so clear and radiant, that this may be a cause for Allaah to misguide them further. We also fear for the common people who may fall prey to the doubts that are spread by these people, as they may be fooled by their apparent righteousness and adherence to the Sunnah.

For these reasons we sought to bring out an advice for the benefit of all. This advice is aimed mainly at two or three categories of people.

Firstly, this is an advice to those who are already affected by this *fitnah*, so that it may serve as a mirror to see their own faults, and they may then seek to rectify them by Allaah's permission. We believe that there could be amongst them those who are sincere, but have fallen prey to this *fitnah* out of ignorance, so we hope for them that they are guided.

And as for those who choose to be stubborn and reject sincere advice, we warn them to fear Allaah and His punishment, as they are playing with the deen of Allaah.

Finally, this is also an advice to Ahlus Sunnah in general so that they can be aware of this danger that lurks within them; so that they can know the signs by which the people of this deviation can be recognized, and save themselves and others from falling into this *fitnah*, by Allaah's aid and permission.

Important: The intent of this advice is to identify a problem/disease and to treat it in the best manner, and this is from having concern and mercy for one another. So let us look into our own selves and correct ourselves if required. And let us refrain from saying "so and so was intended by this advice", as this kind of speech does not bring about benefit and promotes chaotic behavior.

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**Disclaimer:** Although the context of this advice is set in the Indian sub-continent, *it is not intended to be for any specific geographical location*. In fact, more serious manifestations of the erroneous methodologies under discussion can perhaps be found in other parts of the world, like the west and some Arab countries.

#### THE ADVICE

So we begin now with the advice, seeking Allaah's aid...

From the characteristics by which this group can be recognized are:

### 1. Lack of concern towards studying and reflecting upon the Qur'aan and the authentic Sunnah

You will find that this group has a weak connection with the very sources of the deen, the Qur'aan and the authentic Sunnah. Rather their da'wah revolves mainly around the 'ulamaa (scholars), and the aspect of returning to the scholars is given utmost importance. This is apparent from their words and deeds.

The balanced way of Ahlus-Sunnah is to give utmost priority and importance to the Qur'aan and the authentic Sunnah, and studying and reflecting upon them. The scholars come at the next level. Ahlus Sunnah take the scholars as the **means** to aid them in correctly understanding the texts (i.e. the Quran and Hadeeth). Also they do not put themselves forward before the scholars and always remain under their guidance.

#### 2. Gatherings devoid of the remembrance of Allaah

Their gatherings are filled with "Qeel wa Qaal" (So and so said, such and such said). But you will hardly hear "Allaah said" or "His Messenger said". And their gatherings are largely empty from the *dhikr* (remembrance) of Allaah. For these reasons you will find that sitting with them causes the heart to become hard, and away from the *dhikr* of Allaah, and this is from the greatest causes of destruction.

#### 3. Resemblance to the Khawarij

The Khawarij were the first sect to split away from Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah. They had deviated in the matter of *Takfeer* (declaring someone to be a *Kaafir*). They applied the ruling of *kufr* (disbelief) upon that which did not necessitate *kufr*, for example, committing major sins.

What the Khawarij of old had done regarding *Takfeer*, we find this group doing the same in the matter of *Tabdee'* (declaring someone to be an Innovator or person of Innovation). They consider people to be out of the fold of Ahlus Sunnah based on things which do not necessitate that. Also, the Khawarij of old took the texts pertaining to the Kuffaar and applied them to the Muslims. Similarly this group has taken that which applies to the people of innovation and applied it upon Ahlus Sunnah themselves.

#### 4. Faulty understanding regarding the Asl (origin) of a Muslim

With this group, the *Asl* (origin) regarding a Muslim is that he is a person of *bid'ah* (innovation) until proved otherwise. With Ahlus-Sunnah, the *Asl* regarding a Muslim is that he is upon Tawheed and the Sunnah, unless he takes a path of innovation.

## 5. Not differentiating between soundness of the general *manhaj* (methodology), and mistakes and errors in the details of methodology

#### [Note: This is crucial point, so please understand it well!]

Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah regard a person to be upon the Sunnah as long as his general *manhaj* (methodology) is sound. The scholars have defined this general *manhaj* (i.e. the path of the saved sect) in different wordings:

- It is to hold on to the Book and the Sunnah
- ❖ It is to hold on to the Book and the Sunnah, along with giving precedence to the understanding of the Salaf us Saalih
- ❖ It is to hold on to the Book and the Sunnah, upon the *manhaj* of the Salaf us Saalih

These are different wordings, and there is no contradiction between them. All of these definitions carry the same meaning. Basically you are upon the correct methodology if you are upon the Qur'aan and the Sunnah, with its correct understanding.

So whoever is like this (i.e. as described above), we regard him to be upon the Sunnah, even if he has mistakes and errors in the details. So this is a simple, plain and clear criterion, which can be understood without any difficulty.

However we find that this group considers mistakes in the details as if they are mistakes in the general *manhaj*, and due to this they make the ruling of *Tabdee'* based on such mistakes. For example, praising or promoting a certain person of innovation or his books; when the person who is praising is otherwise known for uprightness upon the Book and the Sunnah. This is an error, but it does not mean that the person exits Ahlus Sunnah due to this. Rather some may even go to the extent of taking issues that are not even errors in the details of the *manhaj*, and consider them to be errors in the general *manhaj*! For example, if we do not take care to arrange for proper *duroos* (lessons) on the books of *aqeedah*, *fiqh*, etc., then this is in reality a deficiency in 'amal (action), and not an issue of error in *manhaj*.

Some of them may clearly declare some of Ahlus Sunnah to be from Ahlul Bid'ah. Others are more careful not to use the term of "Innovator" or "people of innovation", but everything else is the same as in the first case, i.e. they deal with Ahlus Sunnah as if they were Ahlul Bid'ah. They abandon the gatherings of the people of knowledge who are near to them, and they see themselves as being separate from the people of Sunnah who live amongst them. Some may accuse the callers amongst the people of Sunnah of having a "hidden agenda", meaning that they outwardly call to the Sunnah but their real motive is something else. Whereas the reality is that they themselves are the ones who are witch-hunting (against Ahlus Sunnah). The callers of Ahlus Sunnah have no other agenda other than to spread the Sunnah.

#### 6. Relying upon taking knowledge from books

From the reasons of their deviation, is that they took their knowledge only from books (and/or the internet) and kept away from the people of knowledge around them. If only they had the scholars amongst them, then the doubts that they have would have been nipped in the bud, and this deviation would not have had a chance to raise its ugly head. From the things that indicate their deviance is that they do not have a single person of knowledge amongst them. 'Abdullaah ibn 'Abbaas *radhiyallaahu anhumaa*, when he debated the Khawaarij, said to them,

"I do not see a single one from the companions of the Prophet salallaahu alayhi wa sallam amongst you.". He used this as a proof to show that they were upon deviance. Based on this, the scholars of the Sunnah have said that to abandon taking knowledge from the people of knowledge is the starting point of danger.

So you may see amongst them those who have memorized a lot, and those who can narrate a lot, but they do not have understanding. So they are misguided and they misguide others. They erred in their understanding because they did not sit with the people of knowledge to begin with. So now based on this faulty understanding, they have built a *manhaj* for themselves, with which they attack Ahlus Sunnah, and in particular the people of knowledge amongst them. As the scholars have said, "Knowledge without understanding is more dangerous than jahl (ignorance)."

#### 7. Taking only from selected scholars and abandoning others

You will find some of the people of this group approving of taking only from some of the senior scholars of the Ummah. So based on this, they do not sit with any of the people of knowledge around them, because these senior scholars are generally far away from where they are.

To these people it is either the *Ulamaa al Kibaar* (senior scholars), or nothing else. What they fail to realize is that knowledge is of levels, and the people of knowledge are of levels. From them is the student of knowledge, the *'aalim'* (scholar), and the *mujtahid* (a scholar who can perform *ijtihaad*). And again within each of these categories, people are of levels. *'Ilm* is to be taken from all of these people because they do not speak except upon knowledge.

Ahlus Sunnah, who are upon the balanced way, say that the 'asl (origin) is to take from the best and the senior-most people of knowledge, if this is possible. Otherwise, we take from whoever from the people of knowledge are available to us and are amongst us.

You will find some others approving of taking knowledge only from those people of knowledge who are from Arab countries and not from the others.

Also, you will find those who say that it is a must for a person to have a *tazkiyah* (recommendation/praise from a scholar) or an *ijaazah* (permission from a scholar to narrate or teach a particular book, etc.); only then can you take knowledge from him. With Ahlus Sunnah, a *tazkiyah* or an *ijaazah* is a means to identify a scholar or a person of knowledge; but the absence of a *tazkiyah* or *ijaazah* does not necessarily mean that the person is not from the people of knowledge. There are other means (which may be even stronger than these) to show that a person is from the people of knowledge. From these ways is that a person is **well known** amongst his people for knowledge and uprightness on the Sunnah. This in itself is sufficient for us to take from him, and is in fact stronger than a *tazkiyah*.

And the reality is that these people don't really take from these selected scholars as well, because they only accept from them as long as what they say does not go against their *manhaj*. But if the scholars' advice and statements go against their *manhaj*, you will see that they do not accept it, rather they invent dubious and twisted arguments in order to avoid what the scholars have advised them with.

#### 8. Attacking the scholars and people of knowledge

You will find that this group makes as their target the best of the people who are amongst them, and they are the people of knowledge from Ahlus Sunnah. So they attack the salafees in the name of salafiyyah and they attack the people of knowledge amongst them in the name of "connecting the people with the scholars". How amazing!! Do they realize the seriousness of their action?!! Do they not fear the standing before Allaah and accounting for their speech and actions!! Do they not know that the flesh of the scholars is poisonous?!! Indeed to Allaah we belong and to Him we shall return.

From the doubts that they bring to prevent the people from the people of knowledge is that they say "Being a graduate from Islaamic university of Madeenah or other salafi universities is not a guarantee that a person is upon the Sunnah or from the people of knowledge". By this statement they wish to stop the people from attending the gatherings of the students of knowledge and scholars who are known for the Sunnah and known for their knowledge.

We say that this is a statement of truth, but with which falsehood is intended. The 'asl (origin) regarding those who have studied at the hands of senior scholars in these universities is that they are upon knowledge and upon the Sunnah. So we sit with them and benefit from them. As for some who have adopted the paths of innovation even after studying in salafi universities, then their degree cannot be used as a proof that they are upon the Sunnah when they have chosen another path for themselves. So this is the balanced understanding.

But for this group of *Juhhaal* (ignoramuses) who use the above argument, the *'asl* is that these people of knowledge are not taken from, until proven otherwise. So take heed, O Sunnee!!

#### 9. Giving fatwa without knowledge

This group claims that they "return to the scholars" for every matter, big or small, and that they do not speak from their own selves. However the reality is that they have the audacity to give fatwa without knowledge regarding some of the most serious matters. For example, they say "You can't take knowledge from this one and that one." Or they say "You have to boycott this one and that one.", "It's not permissible for you to sit with this one or that one."

Another point to be noted is that there are certain characteristics and conditions to determine who the scholars are, i.e. from whom can we take knowledge? And even amongst the scholars only a selected few of them who are deeply rooted in knowledge and have attained a high level enter the field of *Jarh wa Ta'deel*. ["*Jarh wa Ta'deel*" is the science (of hadeeth) in which the scholars determine and declare who is trustworthy/reliable and who is not; who is to be taken from and who is to be abandoned, etc.] Only very few from the elite scholars enter into this area.

Now the point to be noted here is that when the individuals of this group are actually *Juhhaal* (ignorant people) who do not even fulfill the conditions to be a scholar, they have put themselves in the position of those scholars who carry out *Jarh wa Ta'deel;* raising whoever they wish from the people of knowledge, and lowering whoever they wish; including whoever they desire in the ranks of the people of knowledge and excluding whoever they desire!!!

#### 10. Tagleed (blind following) of personalities

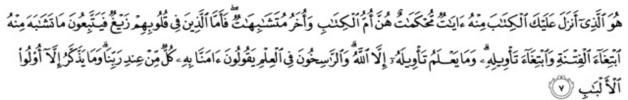
This group has certain people (who are not from the people of knowledge) who they return to know their rulings regarding who is to be taken from, and who is to be abandoned; who is "upon the *manhaj*", and who is not, and so on. They take their principles from these "leaders" although they may not call them as leaders.

You may also find them exaggerating in the praise of a particular scholar, falling into *ghuluww* (extremism) regarding him, and making blameworthy *taqleed* of him. All these affairs are not only in clear opposition to the way of Ahlus Sunnah, but also point to a deficiency in Tawheed.

#### 11. Cutting and pasting statements and twisting them to distort their meanings

In order to support their devious *manhaj*, and when they wish to attack Ahlus Sunnah, they make use of some of the statements of the scholars of the Sunnah. But they do so in a treacherous way, because they take speech out of its true context, they cut off the speech that precedes it or follows it, and paste whatever suits their desires. They distort the meanings of the statements of the scholars and apply them in contexts and situations where they are not applicable at all!! All of this is from their cunning and deception, and we ask Allaah for safety.

From that which further exposes their evil intentions is that if they wished, they could get a clear, unambiguous ruling from the scholars regarding particular groups or individuals; but they do not do so. They take general statements in which there is some ambiguity, and interpret them as they desire.



"It is He Who has sent down to you (Muhammad) the Book (this Qur'an). In it are Verses that are entirely clear, they are the foundations of the Book and others not entirely clear. So as for those in whose hearts there is a deviation (from the truth) they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking *AI-Fitnah* (polytheism and trials, etc.), and seeking for its hidden meanings, but none knows its hidden meanings save Allah. And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: "We believe in it; the whole of it (clear and unclear Verses) are from our Lord." And none receive admonition except men of understanding.

[Surah Aal Imraan: 7]

#### 12. Testing people with individuals who are not from the scholars of the Sunnah

From the signs of this group is that they ask you, "What is your stance regarding so and so?", "What do you say regarding such and such a person". These people regarding which they take a stance are generally either (those who they regard to be) people of innovation or *Juhhaal* (ignorant people). This is an innovated way that clearly opposes the way of Ahlus Sunnah.

We know from the *manhaj* of the salaf that they would judge or test the people based on their love or hatred towards the Imaams and scholars of the Sunnah, and they would not test people with other than them. An example of this is what the Imaam al-Barbahaaree says in his book *Sharh us Sunnah*, "If you find a man who loves Abu Hurairah, Anas ibn Maalik and Usayd ibn Hudayr, know that he is a person of the Sunnah, if Allaah wills."

[Note: Ahlus Sunnah are agreed upon the impermissibility of taking knowledge from the people of bid'ah (innovation), attending their religious talks/gatherings and taking them as close friends or companions. The last point does not negate this in any way]

#### 13. Wasting away precious time

You will find the people of this group spending all or most of their time in speaking about/ against groups and individuals, to the exclusion of seeking beneficial knowledge or engaging in worship. This shows their lack of seriousness towards correcting their own selves and preparing for the meeting with their Lord. The thing that is of utmost importance in this world and in the *Aakhirah* (Hereafter) is to have sound *Eemaan*. And this is not achieved except by beneficial knowledge and righteous action. We ask Allaah for *Tawfeeq* (success).



"The Day when wealth or children will not benefit [anyone]. Except for one who comes to Allah with a sound heart." [Surah ash-Shu'araa: 88-89]

#### 14. Neglecting the affair of unity and brotherhood

From the greatest affairs that the scholars of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah are concerned with is to unite the word of the Muslims and to unite their ranks upon the truth. They give utmost importance to the affair of unity amongst the Muslims in general, and amongst Ahlus Sunnah in particular. The Sunnah is always associated with *Jamaa'ah* (unity), and Bid'ah is always associated with *Furqah* (splitting).

#### 15. A point related to the affair of Da'wah

Da'wah is based upon knowledge. So a person calls to something only if he has knowledge of that. Also just as people are of levels in knowledge, people are of levels when it comes to Da'wah. The greater a person is in knowledge (of the *deen*) the greater his responsibility and level in Da'wah. The lesser a person is in knowledge, the lesser his responsibility and level in Da'wah.

So from this we understand that the main responsibility of Da'wah falls first and foremost upon the *'ulamaa* (scholars). They are the leaders of the Da'wah. However, those who are not scholars should neither cut themselves off completely from Da'wah, nor should they put themselves in the position of the scholars. Rather, according to their capability and knowledge, they order the good and forbid the evil, and call to the truth. All the while, they recognize their level and remain under the guidance of the scholars, and they do not put themselves forward before the scholars.

However, we find that this group makes Da'wah absolutely restricted to the scholars only, and absolutely prevents others from Da'wah. So even if a person has some knowledge, they prevent him from spreading that knowledge on the pretext that he is not a scholar. This attitude stems from a deficient and incorrect understanding of the *deen*, and will only result in the spread of ignorance and covering up of knowledge.

#### 16. Lack of Rahmah (mercy) towards the creation

This is another matter that contributes to the hardening of the heart. Also, when a person lacks mercy towards the creation, he is quick to attack and destroy. But the one who has *Rahmah* fears for the creation, gives sincere advice, and makes *du'aa* and hopes that they are guided to the truth.

In an authentic hadeeth, the Messenger of Allaah sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam said:

"The Most Merciful shows mercy to those who have mercy on others. Show mercy to those on earth, and the One above the heaven will show mercy to you."
[Abu Dawood and others]

He sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam also said:

"He who does not show mercy (to others) will not be shown mercy (by Allaah)." [Bukhari and Muslim]

Shaykhul Islaam Ibn Taymiyah rahimahullaah said:

"Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah are the most knowledgeable of people regarding the truth, and the most merciful of people towards the creation."

#### CONCLUDING NOTE

#### A word pertaining to Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth, India:

In the context of the Indian subcontinent, we find that this group speaks against and warns against *Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth*. In fact, it is one of their main targets of attack. The *Jamiat* has been a representative of Ahlus Sunnah in India for a long time; and has always been a source of strength and support for the *Ahle Hadeeth* in India. The senior scholars have always spoken in one voice in praise of the *Ahle Hadeeth* in India, and also regarding aiding and supporting the *Jamiat* upon goodness. However this group chooses to conveniently ignore the advice of the scholars regarding the *Jamiat*. This is a crystal clear example of their clear opposition to the advice of the scholars when it goes against their *manhaj* or desires.

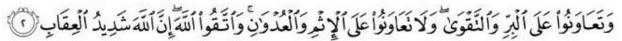
In regard to the issue of *Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth*, we feel that the advice given by Shaykh Saleh as Suhaymee *hafidhahullaah* during his visit here is more than sufficient for those who desire the truth.

You could listen to the recording of the Shaykh's advice <a href="here">here</a>.

Shaykh Saleh as Suhaymee's speech on *Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth*:

"I thank the brothers who are responsible for this *Jamiat*, and I request the brothers to cooperate with them upon the good work that they are doing. And even if it is mentioned that they have some faults with them, then we co-operate with them in rectifying these mistakes and removing them completely. We should co-operate upon good, and if we find something of mistakes in our brothers, then we correct our brothers, and we strive to rectify the affairs, instead of speaking (ill of them), insulting or ridiculing them. This is not permissible! It is not permissible for the Muslim to do this!

And some people say that it is not allowed to set up <code>Jam'iyyaat</code>, etc. However, we say that it is not prohibited to set up <code>Jam'iyyaat</code>. Rather I say that at times, it could even be obligatory to set up such <code>Jam'iyyaat</code>, especially in the non-Islaamic countries. And these <code>Jam'iyyat</code> are present even in the Islaamic countries. We have with us the <code>Jam'iyyah</code> for memorization of the Qur'aan and the <code>Jam'iyyah</code> for da'wah in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. But this (setting up of <code>Jam'iyyaat</code>) is to be done with the condition that it is not taken as a group based on which <code>al-walaa wal-baraa</code> is done (i.e. to consider that whoever is within the <code>Jam'iyyah</code> is with us and whoever is outside is against us — this is not allowed). It is not to be taken as a partisan group in opposition to the <code>manhaj</code> of the salaf. As for those <code>Jam'iyyaat</code>, whether they are officially registered or non-official, which are upon the <code>manhaj</code> of the salaf, <code>then it is obligatory to co-operate upon rectifying the deficiencies. We do not remain upon error. Rather it is obligatory to co-operate upon righteousness and piety.</code>



Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression. [Surah al Maidah: 2]"

[End of quote from Shaykh Saleh as Suhaymee hafidhahullaah]

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Firstly, I thank Allaah and praise Him for facilitating and making easy the compilation of this advice, and I ask Him to make this work sincerely for His sake, and that He accepts it from us. I also ask Allaah that the purpose for which this advice is written in achieved in the best way, and that He brings about much benefit by way of this advice.

I then thank the esteemed scholar, Shaykh Wasiyyullaah 'Abbaas *hafidhahullaah* for taking the time to check and review this work; and those brothers who co-ordinated with the shaykh for this matter. I also thank the people of knowledge at Bangalore who painstakingly carried out the initial review.

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